

September 20, 2010

WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24) announced today that the U.S. Department of Education has awarded \$299,433 to the Broome-Tioga BOCES Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS) Initiative to continue efforts to promote healthy childhood development and prevent violence and the abuse of alcohol and other drugs.

"We must give children as many tools as possible to help them succeed in school," **said Arcuri.** "And these tools are not just pens, pencils and textbooks, but programs that promote healthy behavior, engage students in activities that strengthen their minds and encourage them to stay in school. This grant will help ensure that Southern Tier students are empowered to lead healthier, happier lives."

The Broome-Tioga BOCES Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative, Safe Healthy Attitudes Require Education (SHARE), serves 10 school districts in Broome County, NY. The addition of a Team Youth Mentoring Program will focus on reducing truancy, bullying, first-time school-based offenses, first-time offenses involving the criminal justice system, recidivism, and violent incidents. Team mentoring involves several adults working with small groups of youth in which the adult-to-youth ratio is not greater than 1:4. The group nature of these interactions will directly support positive role modeling and the development of positive interpersonal skills.

The Team Youth Mentoring Program will be integrated into the implementation of the Olweus Anti-bullying Program in the 10 middle schools served by SHARE. Youth mentors will serve on school-based anti-bullying committees, engage with parents and community leaders, and reinforce home-school-community connections. Team mentoring will take place in the community as part of the Community Schools model, which engages community stakeholders and leaders and supports schools' roles as centers of the community. Activities will be driven by youth interests and strengths, and include those that provide opportunities for team and trust building. Additionally, teams will design and implement an annual community service or charitable event.

The grants are part of a combined effort by the Departments of Education, Justice and Health and Human Services to provide students, schools, and communities with enhanced comprehensive education, mental health, social service, law enforcement, and juvenile justice

services to promote healthy childhood development and prevent violence and substance abuse.

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